

COUNTRY USSR/Estonia

SUBJECT Oil Industry in Estonia

ORIGIN

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SUPPLEMENT

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EVALUATION OF CONTENT

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1. The Estonian oil district is located in the province of Virumaa (northeastern Estonia) and has its centers at Kiviõli, Kohtla-Järve, Jõhvi, Ahtme, and Silla-mäe. It is estimated that the total oil shale deposits here are about 5.5 billion mte. During the war the Germans increased the oil production. (Estonian oil is said to be heavier than water, hence will not rise to the surface in the case of a damaged submarine.) They enlarged the plant at Kiviõli and built an entirely new plant at Ahtme. Since the re-occupation of Estonia by the Russians the oil industry has been in the hands of the oil combine "Kohtla", owned by the Estonian Soviet Republic. The Russians claim to have reached the pre-war production level. At the end of 1946 "Kohtla" was awarded 30,000 rubles by the Estonian Government for outstanding industrial achievements during that year.
2. At the time of their retreat the Germans thoroughly blasted the plant at Ahtme, leaving only the walls standing. By January of 1947 the rubble had been cleaned up and reconstruction started. The job may take several years. During 1946 the Russians constructed a one-track railroad line connecting Ahtme with Jõhvi (on the Tallinn-Leningrad rail line). This railroad runs parallel with and east of the Jõhvi-Ahtme highway.
3. At Ahtme a big mining pit, number 10, is in operation again after repair of war damage. However, pump equipment necessary for fighting periodical floods is still lacking. Labor consists of two hundred German PW's and Estonians. Opposite this pit new administration buildings are under construction. They are of granite and will be bomb-proof. The foundations are three to four meters under the earth. The buildings contain space for storing. A power plant, burning oil shale, is located near pit 10 and will supply the Ahtme factory.
4. Two new mining pits, numbers 7 and 8, were built by the Russians during 1946 between Jõhvi and Puru (on the new Ahtme-Jõhvi rail line). Oil shale here is excellent and can be mined by the light of day. Other new pits are being planned here. Farmers in this area will be evacuated by May 1947. Oil shale from these pits will be processed at the Ahtme plant upon its reconstruction.
5. The Russians built another new pit between Kohtla and Püssi south of the main rail line. The pit is 200 m. long, 6 m. wide, and 8 m. deep.
6. The Kiviõli plant, enlarged by the Germans, is now suffering from a lack of technically qualified personnel.

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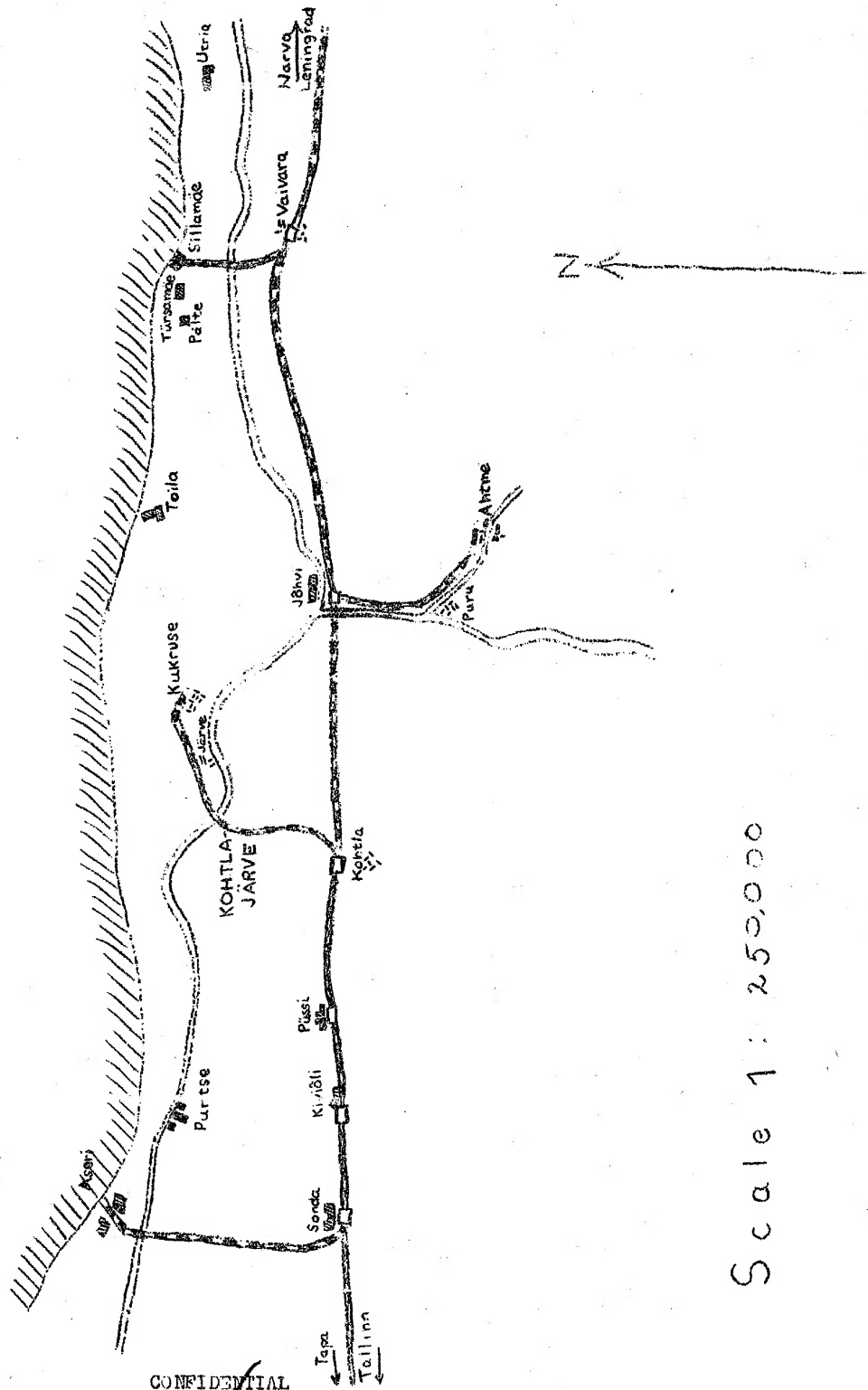
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7. All pits are working twenty-four hours a day, with three shifts.
8. Much of the oil shale mined in the Kohtla district is transported in the direction of Tallinn in three to four trains daily, each train consisting of about twenty full freight cars.

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